

# Hillandale

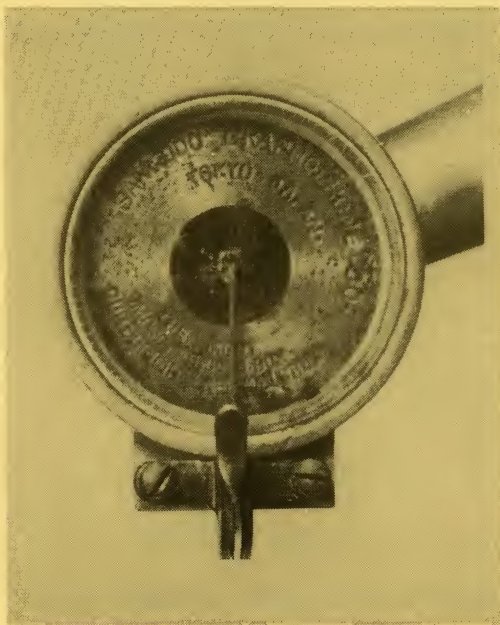


Journal of the  
City of London  
Phonograph and  
Gramophone Society

THE HILLANDALE NEWS

JUNE 1986. No. 150

ISSN-0018-1846



The legend on this Japanese  
Graphophone soundbox reads:

SANKODO GRAPHOPHONE  
CO. TOKYO. JAPAN.

THE MOST IMPROVED  
SOUND BOX  
QUITE ORIGINAL  
REPRODUCTION

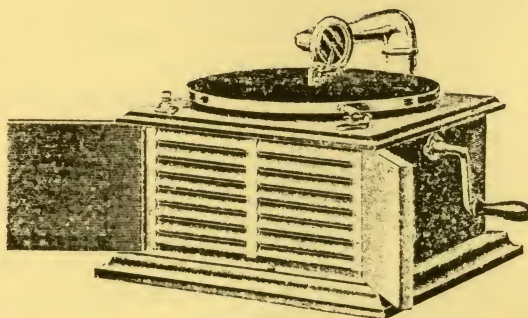
It was found on a table  
grand Grafonola of around  
1912

THE  
**SERMONETTE 12**

**Is the Big Summer Seller.**

*There is a Reason:*

**ONE  
POUND  
TWELVE  
AND SIX.**



*Selling Price.*

**£1 : 12 : 6**

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**BEKA RECORD, BERLIN.**

Sole Agents for Machines :

**M. & A. WOLFF, 19/21, Fore St. Avenue, LONDON, E.C.**

# THE HILLDALE NEWS

Official Journal of the City of London Phonograph & Gramophone Society  
(founded 1919)

EDITOR: Christopher Proudfoot,

DISTRIBUTION: D.R.Roberts,

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# HOMOPHONE IN BRITAIN

by Frank Andrews

## PART 4

Having been absent from the catalogues for three years and eight months, the Homochord label was re-introduced in October 1933, two months after the disappearance of the Four-in-One records. The familiar naked lady harpist was again prominent, this time on a plum and gold label. These ten-inch records began a catalogue series with HN.1 to HN.8, but in November the HN prefix was changed to HR. They sold at only 1/-, no doubt to compete with Crystalate's REX records, which were selling at the same price. By the end of 1933 there were 39 in the catalogue, but there were only eight months of issues. In May 1934 the resurrected Homochords expired for ever.

A High Court judgement had decreed that the owners of original recorded masters had the right to protect their property, and had made it an offence to play recordings to the public without recompense to the proprietors. Licensing fees were fixed by agreement in February 1934, and in May Phonographic Performances Ltd. was formed to operate the licensing, with Louis Sterling of E.M.I. as Chairman. British Homophone was one of the participating companies, and David Sternberg a Director. Sternberg was now not only Managing Director of British Homophone but also Chairman, having succeeded Mr. Hooker, who had resigned in April. Mr. Fletcher, the general manager, associated with the Homophone business for over thirty years, was now appointed a director.

On the formation of Phonographic Performances Ltd., shares in British Homophone, which had been down to 1½d., rocketed to 2½d! The company was in debt to the tune of £143,330. In July 1934 they sought another £25,000 by way of debentures with charges against the Kilburn studios, the works at Stonebridge, and against 45,125 shares in Ebonestos Insulators Ltd. In August £19,500-worth of earlier debentures were repaid. The Midland Bank still had first charge on the freeholds.

Once licences were required for the public performances of records, there sprang up new recording companies, non-participants in Phonographic Performances Ltd., to produce and supply records licence-free to cinemas, theatres, fairgrounds, ice-rinks and dance-halls. On 29th August British Homophone submitted CINECORD and KINOCORD as trademarks, and they were registered in November. In December, Lewis's Ltd., who owned five department stores, equipped their emporia with BTH public address systems for general announcements and "music while you shop", and it was probably about that time that British Homophone began to supply them with 8-inch discs labelled "LEWIS'S LONG LIFE" and pressed from the 3-minute Plaza matrices.

In January 1935 Homophone shares, which had been holding a 3d. quotation for some weeks, dropped to an all-time low of 1d. Despite (or maybe because of ) the lack of confidence shown in the company's prospects, British Homophone re-introduced its SOLEX label, now pressed as a 10-inch disc with a red-and-gold label, and with a catalogue series beginning at SX.101. The matrices had the 'S' prefixed numbers in use for Sterno.

THE SOUND WAVE for OCTOBER 1933

Here are Your—

# 3 “Best Sellers!”

## “PLAZA”

A Sixpenny Masterpiece of recording that is a big money maker for Record Retailers. Enables you to compete on equal terms with your keenest rivals—the “Nothing over sixpence” stores. Moreover, the “PLAZA” offers you BETTER QUALITY, BETTER RECORDING, BETTER TITLES and A MUCH LONGER TUNE than any other 6d. disc. Equals high priced Records in purity of tone and volume of sound. Unquestionably the most astounding value ever offered. Remember—Sixpenny Records are “all the rage.” The big stores sell millions every year. Now's your chance to cater for the thousands of people who will only buy Records that are ultra cheap. Secure a good supply to-day. Get into touch with your local Factor at once or send your order to us without delay.

8-INCH  
Double-sided.  
Retails at

**6<sup>D.</sup>**  
EACH

10-INCH  
Double-sided.  
Retails at

**1'-**  
EACH

## “HOMOCHORD”

has only just been released. Years ago the “HOMOCHORD” sold in colossal numbers at 2s. 6d. each. To-day it is in every way superlatively superior, and a “BOB” BUYS IT! Compares favourably with the most costly Records on the market. Has been produced to enable Dealers to meet the requirements of those who will not pay more than 1s. for a two-tune disc. Titles comprise a splendid variety of vocal and instrumental numbers that are prime favourites with gramophone owners and wireless “fans” everywhere. Press critiques say the “HOMOCHORD” surpasses every other type of Record from the standpoint of sterling value. Is a “red hot” seller. Our factory is working day and night to cope with the unprecedented demand. So order immediately to ensure prompt delivery.

## “STERNO”

Records are world-famed for perfection of recording and all-round super excellence. There's nothing on the market at any price to approach it in quality and tonal clarity. Many of the most famous dance bands—including the celebrated Casani Orchestra directed by the renowned “Charlie” Kunz—play exclusively for “STERNO.” So do most of the premier vocal and instrumental Artists of the day. Regardless of cost we secure the finest talent in the world. That is why we have been compelled to increase the price from 1s. 3d. to 1s. 6d. “Cash in” on this unbeatable line while the clamour for “STERNO” Records is at its height. Sell a Record that will give your patrons unqualified satisfaction and enhance the prestige of your Store.

Order from your Factor TO-DAY, or from THE BRITISH HOMOPHONE CO., LTD., Barry Road, Stonebridge Park, London, N.W. 10. (Telephones : Willesden 0386, 0387 and 4394.)

10-INCH.  
Double-sided.  
Retails at

**1'6**  
EACH



Mr. Fletcher, the recording manager and new director, was the subject of an article in the February 'Sound Wave', but the following month he left British Homophone and joined the Irwin Dash Music Co. Ltd., music publishers. In the same month of March, Charlie Kunz, pianist and dance band leader, broke his ties with the company to make REX records for Crystalate. (He later appeared on Decca.) March also saw the Sterno records, which only seven months previously had been increased in price to 2/6d, reduced to 1/-.

After April 1935, advertising for British Homophone disappeared from the pages of the trade periodicals, along with any mention of their Sterno and Solex records. I am not aware that any new recordings took place after March 1935, although the factory kept open and presumably the pressing of repeat orders continued.

### CINECORD

On August 1935 the Cinecord Company was registered, with offices at 49 Whitfield Street, London. The directors were Jack Lessor of the Donnington Finance Co. Ltd., and a Mr. Marcus of Carlton Amusements Ltd. of Tottenham Court Road, possibly the proprietors of the Carlton Cinema there. As mentioned, Cinecord had been a registered trademark of British Homophone for nine months, but it seems likely that the company never made use of it until the Cinecord Company was founded. It is possible that Cinecord Ltd. was promoted by British Homophone but it was a short-lived enterprise. It was formed too late to be included in the 1936 London Directory, and there was no entry in any of the later editions, from which one assumes the company had ceased to exist. This cannot be verified from Public Records as the company's files were destroyed by order of the Denning Committee.

At least 21 discs are known to have been pressed for Cinecord by British Homophone from Sterno matrices or from new matrices in the recording stores so far unused.

Unlike all the later labels of British Homophone, the Cinecords did not have a stroboscopic edge to their labels, which were magenta-and-gold. They had an 0-prefixed catalogue series and a matrix series with the 'S' prefix common to Sterno and Solex. No manufacturer's name appeared on the label, and they were not advertised in the gramophone periodicals. The label carried no message about patents, nor about the prohibition of public performances. Some of the recordings featured cinema organs from various theatres on the Odeon circuit, so it would seem they were produced for use in cinemas on a licence-free basis. Perhaps sales were also made to patrons in cinema foyers.

During its later years British Homophone carried out contract work, with such labels as SILVER KING (for a golf-ball manufacturer), PEACOCK'S STORES (who also had Decca pressings) and a red-and-gold MUSIC MASTER disc which has a Sterno look about it, but whose matrices were from the defunct Filmophone Flexible Record Company. Did British Homophone make discs for talking cinematograph films? I know they made transcription discs for businesses which advertised on European commercial radio stations.

After the last advertisements for Sternos in April 1935, British Homophone continued in occupation of its Stonebridge factory until some time between September 1937 and September 1938. In January 1936 another £15,000 of debentures had been authorised: £3,000 issued in March and another £10,300 in May. They carried second charges on all the London properties and on shares in Ebonestos Insulators Ltd. Unless it was misprint, the 5/- shares were quoted at 11½d. in July but fell back to 1d. in August 1936. On 5th January 1937 Ebonestos Insulators changed its corporate name to Ebonestos Industries Ltd.

## THE CLOSING CHAPTERS

In May 1937 the British Homophone Company Ltd. entered into an agreement with Decca Records and E.M.I. Ltd. In return for a payment of £22,500 British Homophone and their associates agreed to withdraw from the business of making disc records for sale to the public, and not to resume for the next twenty years. All the company's metal matrices (except for 300 masters), all copyrights, trademarks and registered designs, all file cards appertaining to its discs, and all finished discs (except for the KID-KORD albums) became the property of British Phonograph Records Ltd.

British Phonograph Records Ltd. had been formed two months earlier on 31st March, with £100 capital in shares divided evenly between The Decca Record Co. Ltd. (who had just bought the records side of the Crystalate business) and the Columbia Graphophone Co. Ltd. (now a subsidiary of E.M.I.). Most of the material acquired from British Homophone was sold off, but both E.M.I. (through Columbia) and Decca were licensed to use any matrices they wished. Of the Sterno matrices, thirty were thought suitable for the Columbia label, four for Parlophone, and 196 for Regal-Zonophone, but how many were actually used I cannot say. Nor do I know what material may have been used by Decca Records on the Decca, Rex, Panachord and Vocalion labels. The KID-KORD albums were included in the Decca catalogues. Other income was expected from the sale of needles and from broadcasts and other copyright fees

British Homophone continued in the recording business, but not for public sales. Between October 1938 and August 1939 the company came under the control of Crystalate Ltd., the new name of the company which had sold its records interests to Decca in 1937. Ebonestos Industries Ltd. were involved. Jack Lessor, of Cinecord Ltd., had become a director of British Homophone, and upon its take-over by Crystalate he became a director of that company too.

I know that in 1969 British Homophone were having long-playing records pressed at Ebonestos Industries' works at Rollins Street, London SE15; this is British Homophone's official address today. In recent years they have come under the control of the Kassner Associated Publishers group. Ebonestos Industries Ltd. is owned by Crystalate (Holdings) Ltd., and since June 16th 1983 British Phonograph Records Ltd. has been a subsidiary of Polygram Leisure Ltd.

What was almost certainly the last 78 rpm disc to be pressed by British Homophone was produced in the long-playing era. It had the unlikely coupling of "There'll Always be an England" and "Tiptoe Through the Tulips", recorded by the pop star, Tiny Tim. It was allegedly pressed on an original press and bagged in the old style. I know nothing of this special issue, and would welcome any information which readers may be able to furnish. F.A.

### CORRIGENDA

One or two misprints crept into the first two parts of this series: some were self-evident, but for the record, here are three corrections that should be noted:

PART 1 (December 1985), Page 287, Paragraph 3, first sentence: for 'Columbia Graphophone Company' read 'Columbia Phonograph Co. Gen'l.'

PART 2 (February 1986), Page 314, Paragraph 3, line 4, the initial issue of Homochords was 101 to 181, not 108 as printed. Page 316, Para. 6, penult. sentence: after 'Bb (10")' insert 'and Cc (12")' with Zonophones having Yy (10") and Zz (12").'



# Eric Coates

by Ken Loughland

August this year will see the centenary of the birth of Eric Coates, one of the most popular and successful composers of good light music that this country has ever produced. There can be few people, even among the unmusical, who are not familiar with snatches of some of his best-known works, even if, in the celebrated British manner so regularly demonstrated on phone-in radio programmes of the 'Guess the Tune' type, there are many who recognise the melodies but cannot put a name to them. Let us, then, have a brief look at the history of the man who created so much music that was good, although undemanding, and who was so well served by the gramophone.

Eric Coates, whose music so often conjures up the active, light-hearted spirit of London, was a Midlander, born on the 27th of August 1886 at Hucknall, some five miles north of Nottingham. Music came early into his life, and he began violin lessons when he was six, and then went on at the age of twelve to study in Nottingham with teachers of the violin and harmony. He next took up the viola and employed his acquired skill with that instrument to complete the personnel of a Nottingham-based amateur string orchestra. He also played in various other local ensembles, all of which provided valuable early experience in orchestral playing.

As was the case with so many who became famous in the field of music, there was early pressure upon him to set his musical studies aside and enter the world of commerce, in this case banking, but young Coates had firmly decided to seek his living as a professional musician, and this led him, in 1906, to the Royal Academy of Music in London, to study under celebrated teachers. He studied the viola under the great Lionel Tertis, Leipzig-trained and ten years his senior, and composition under Frederick Corder, who had among his other pupils Bax, Bantock and Holbrooke. Corder, in collaboration with his wife, also produced English versions of the libretti of Wagner's Ring, Parsifal and other works. Coates's third teacher at the R.A.M. was Hartley Braithwaite, with whom he studied the piano.

In the next few years Eric Coates gained further experience with various theatre orchestras and other musical groups including the Hambourg String Quartet, which he joined for a tour of South Africa in 1908.

At this time in his life Coates began to take an interest in composition as a parallel activity to his string playing, but whereas his work in string ensembles was largely concerned with the standard classical repertoire, he believed his inclinations as a composer would best be fulfilled within the realm of light music. Early fruits of this inclination were 'Four Old English Songs', otherwise known as 'Four Songs with Orchestra', which were performed at a Promenade Concert at the Queen's Hall in London under the baton of Henry Wood (later Sir Henry) in 1909. Coates was a founder-member of the Beecham Symphony Orchestra, and he played in the Cathie and Walenn String Quartets as well as in the Queen's Hall Orchestra, of which he became principal viola in 1912. The interest shown by Sir Henry Wood must surely have encouraged Coates to continue to compose, which he did for almost the rest of his life.

Eric Coates eventually left the Queen's Hall Orchestra in 1919 to concentrate



upon composition and on conducting his own music in Britain and abroad.

Much of his music was broadcast, and without doubt his fame among the general public (and the sales of his records) received an enormous boost when Eric Maschwitz chose 'Knightsbridge', the march from the 'London Suite', to introduce the first and every subsequent programme in the BBC radio series 'In Town Tonight'. Later, his 'By the Sleepy Lagoon' was adopted as the signature tune of 'Desert Island Discs', and the march 'Calling All Workers' for the long-running, twice-daily broadcasts of 'Music While You Work' which went out during the Second World War and for many years after.

Eric Coates was by any standards a prolific composer, and much of his orchestral music was recorded under his own baton. There is surely no need to comment in detail on his music here, since so many of us know it so well. His songs were fine and varied and recorded by a very wide range of famous singers including McCormack, Piccaver, Titterton - and Ronnie Ronald. His orchestral suites show a sureness of touch in their scoring; the dances exude gaiety and the marches optimism. The atmospheric pieces are often tranquil but rarely, if ever, melancholy, and here and there we hear a bar or two to remind us that Coates knew his Elgar, his Delius, and the other masters. Above all, there is a sense of sprightliness in his music: 'Allegro' could have been his middle name.

Space would not permit a comprehensive list of his recorded works to be appended to this piece, but it is interesting for the historians among us to note that early recordings of his music can be found among single-sided HMV discs, Edison Blue Amberol cylinders, acoustic plum-label HMV records in the 'B' and 'C' series and a Columbia 'L' series light blue acoustic. The works of Coates on record would need a great deal of any collector's storage space, and a comprehensive label collection would represent all the well-known British companies, as well as Pathe, Sterno, Duophone, Scala, Piccadilly Edison Bell Winner and Radio, Homochord, Dominion, Filmophone and several others.

Many of his recordings on shellac records have since been commercially reissued on long-playing discs and cassettes by such firms as World Records and Decca, and there have also been (and may there continue to be) original recordings on LP.

For those interested in discographies, a useful listing of works by Coates on record is included in a booklet on the composer compiled by Stuart Upton of the Vintage Light Music Society and published by the VLMS in 1980. Copies are available from Mr. Upton at [REDACTED] price £1.00 including U.K. postage and surface mail overseas.

Eric Coates died in December 1957 at Chichester, aged 71. Let us pay tribute, in our way, to him in this, the centenary year of his birth by playing our records of his unpretentious, but finely crafted and exquisitely orchestrated music, and may the time return when real light music by this and other composers receives the amount of live performance and broadcast 'air time' it deserves.

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY: JULY 29

The Society will welcome Allen G. Debus from the University of Chicago to the Bloomsbury Institute, to give a talk on BERT WILLIAMS ON RECORD. This will start at 7.00 p.m. and will be a celebration of the great black performer whose recordings ranged from 1901 to just before his death in 1922. The talk will include slides, a silent film made in 1914 ("A Natural Born Gambler") and some of Bert Williams' records.

# Correspondence

## STEREO IMAGE

Dear Christopher,

I was most interested to read Ivor Abelson's letter on 'Stereo Sound' from acoustic discs in the February Hillandale.

'Stereo' reproduction is achieved from long-playing records by the use of a pick-up sensitive to both lateral and vertical excursions. The acoustic reproducer is only sensitive to movement in one plane: either lateral in the case of the ordinary soundbox or vertical in the Edison, Pathe or similar systems.

On this basic principle, paper theorists will already have dismissed Mr. Abelson's theory 'out of court', but there is much more to this than meets the eye. I have on many occasions experienced the spacial or 'soundstage' effect which Mr. Abelson describes. It varies with different instrument designs and I feel its cause is, in part at least, due to mechanical resonances.

The modern stereo pick-up operates on a cantilever principle and resonances caused by the velocity of the grooves, record warp etc. are damped in one of two ways: in high compliance cartridges the vibrations are damped within the pick-up itself, while in low compliance designs such vibrations are tempered by the tone-arm design (fluid damping, for example).

In the acoustic gramophone, a complete chain of resonance is created between the tip of the needle and the entire cabinet housing the instrument. Different frequencies will cause different parts of the cabinet, horn or arm to resonate in sympathy with the recorded sound.

Experimenting in this field is most enjoyable and I have found that altering the position of the instrument can also change the ambient sound quality. I would assume the cause of such changes is structural resonances within the listening environment.

Some of my most rewarding experiences in this field have been the sounds produced by a cabinet model Edison Diamond Disc phonograph and with Columbia machines which employed their divided exponential horn.

I do hope Mr. Abelson's letter will encourage others to try out the idea for themselves.

Glasgow, May 18th.

John Cavanagh

## SPECIAL CABLES

Dear Christopher,

Further to Ivor Abelson's article on Special Cables for Hi-Fi speakers, I am intrigued by his recommendation to separate the 'woofer' from the 'tweeter' at the cross-over unit, and wire each separately back to the amplifier.



Surely he means us to remove the cross-over unit from the speaker cabinet, move it adjacent to the power amplifier output, and THEN use separate cables to the 'woofer' and 'tweeter'? The connecting of high-frequency loudspeakers directly to amplifier outputs is to be strongly discouraged, unless you are conducting experiments into the use of loud-speaker cones as projectiles!

The function of a cable (or 'interconnect') is to join the speaker to the amplifier without losses. In order to achieve this, it must have:

- A) resistance small compared to that of the loudspeaker
- B) series reactance (i.e. inductive) small compared with that of the loudspeaker
- C) shunt reactance (i.e. capacitive) large compared with that of the loudspeaker.

In addition there should be a minimum of inductive coupling between conductors, though this should be negligible unless you keep your amplifier several hundred feet from your speakers!

As far as A) is concerned, bear in mind that 80 Watts (sorry, Len, nothing to do with you) applied to an 8-ohm speaker, ignoring reactive components, will produce a current of approximately 3 Amps r.m.s. Many amplifiers are capable of producing currents of this order, so bell-wire is obviously unsuitable. From there on, it is largely a matter of personal choice. I have been using 1.5mm<sup>2</sup> twin solid mains wiring cable for my speakers for some years, and am quite happy with the results.

Around the cross-over frequency, rapid phase shifts occur, and the manufacturers of good speaker systems take this into account when designing their filter networks. The connecting of long leads between the cross-over outputs and the speakers would not have been included in their calculations and could result in strange, unforeseen resonances, not to mention blurring of the stereo image. All I can say is, try it if you want to. If you don't like the results, you can always put it back as it was.

Regarding mains cables, I have seen it shown (in one of the leading hi-fi journals) that in order to rapidly re-charge the large coupling capacitors that transistorised amplifiers have in series with their outputs after a heavy transient, MAINS current in excess of 30 Amps is frequently required for a (very) short time, and in order that this can happen without voltage drop and associated distortion, a separate, cooker-sized mains feed should be installed from the main distribution box! This size of cable should be maintained right up to the mains transformer terminals, no 13 Amp plugs, no 5 Amp fuses! A 50 Amp switched fused wall box should do the trick, but make sure its brass screws are done up really tight, and that the switch blades are really clean. Do not ruin the whole effect by including little mains switches on the backs of volume controls! Switch on at the wall box!

Whatever would E.M.Ginn have thought of it?

Liss, Hampshire, May 4th.

David M.W. Evans

Dear Christopher,

I see in 'Collecting Phonographs & Gramophones' that the Aeolian Vocalion tone-arm is prone to breaking. I have managed to cut out the soundbox with an air-drill and find garden hose fits continental style soundbox to Aeolian arm. If you know anyone who could take copies of the arm for fellow members, I will pass it on.

Colchester

John R. Gomez

Dear Christopher,

A comment in the current issue of Hillandale News prompted the thought, Has anybody a good system for mending cracked or broken cylinders? I suppose everyone with cylinders has encountered the odd broken cylinder, and if it is a nondescript subject simply discarded it. However if it is or was a good one what then? I've managed to 'stitch' the insides of cracks in wax cylinders with a hot needle fairly well, and bridged splits in celluloid cylinders with car body filler, but that's about my limit.

I've tried various solvents in attempts to glue cylinders but not very good results were obtained. I suppose if only the subject, i.e. the music or whatever that is required from a cylinder, it would be possible to re-record a cracked cylinder, even with a displaced section, and then 'launder' it electronically to remove the clicks, but this is rather different to wanting to hear the cylinder itself now and then. Has anyone got any useful hints?

Newcastle, May 2nd

Best Wishes, Phil Bailey

Dear Christopher,

I cannot claim to be long in the tooth gramophone/record collecting wise, but in the years in which I have been involved I have only now come across a double track record.

It is Columbia DB627 with a violin soloist Bernard Reillie sharing with a contralto Nellie Walker on both sides. This is not a record in which one item is recorded and then the second follows in the remaining unused centre area. The pieces are marked (a) and (b) and both start on the same diameter of the record but on opposite sides. It is a little difficult to make sure that you get the piece you want played.

Can anyone provide any information on this experiment, its date and *raison d'être*?

Brough, April 4th

Sincerely, Jim Friend

(See the article below - Ed.)

## THE LASER READING OF CYLINDERS

A member has kindly drawn my attention to a paper\* written by four Japanese scientists working in Hokkaido University at Sapporo, Japan. One is in the Department of Electrical Engineering, the others researching Applied Electricity. It is entitled "Reproduction of Sound from Old Wax Phonograph Cylinders, Using the Laser-Beam Reflection Method."

The reason prompting this research was the unearthing of 65 wax cylinders in a Polish university in 1977. These had been made from 1902 to 1905 by an anthropologist called Pilsudsky and are vital to the rediscovery of the folklore of the Ainu people of Sakhalin; this had been largely lost since the time of the recording.

By projecting a laser beam through a lens to track the moving groove of the cylinder, the signal is reflected into a detector and translated into sound. The paper



explains this in some detail for the technical, but is utterly beyond further explanation by the writer.

An interesting point is that 24 of the 65 cylinders were broken or cracked, and these will be repaired where possible and transcribed by the laser process where it would be hard to do with the normal stylus method.

Many of us have thought for a long time that a laser or similar method would one day be used to "read" the grooves on cylinders or disc records, but have seen this come in the form of Compact Disc. It now looks possible for surviving strips of recorded tin-foil to be read by laser, although they will probably yield very little of historical importance.

The paper makes no mention of how the laser beam copes with mould on the cylinders

George Frow

\*Published in APPLIED OPTICS, March 1st 1986, Vol. 25, No. 5

### A NOTE FROM THE TREASURER

From time to time members contact the Treasurer to enquire whether their subscription has been received and if a receipt could be sent. This can be worrying for members and time consuming for the Treasurer.

Currently the system operates as follows: A renewal slip is included with the December magazine. When subscriptions are received by the Treasurer, membership cards are made out and forwarded in bulk to Dave Roberts who inserts them in the February issue. The card constitutes a formal receipt. If, by the time of posting, Dave has not received a card for a given member he will insert a reminder slip.

Naturally the process takes some time. A certain number of cards must be accumulated before being posted to Dave Roberts/ otherwise the postage and stationary cost would be too high. Moreover, subscriptions and therefore cards may be just too late for inclusion in the magazine and must wait nearly two months for the next magazine. So you may very well get a reminder when you know you have already paid and still not get a membership card. Remember what the reminder slip says:- "Please ignore if you have paid within the last three weeks".

Money very rarely goes astray, so you can be reasonably certain that action is being taken; absolutely certain if the bank tells you your cheque has been properly cashed. Occasionally money is received without name, address or membership number and then all that can be done is to wait for someone to complain.

It is just not practical to post membership cards or receipts individually so please bear with us. One plea: please put your membership on the renewal slip when you send your subscriptions. It saves hours of work!

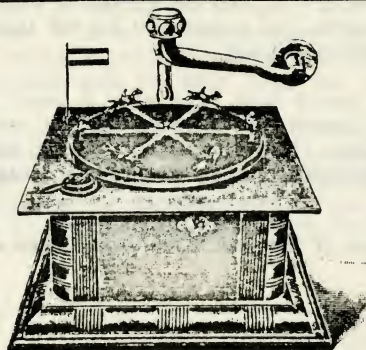
# SIDE LINES FOR TALKING MACHINE DEALERS.

## The "Symphonista"

English Patent 8141.

**2/6**  
**Retail.**

There are times when even the most ardent Music Lover is tired of listening to his Gramophone, and wishes to give his friends a change of amusement. Our Gramo "Derby" solves this problem. You can use this interesting and fascinating game on any Disc machine with any size turntable.



## Gramo "Derby"

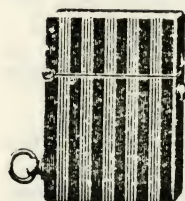
Also protected in Germany, Austria, France, etc.

### Instructions.

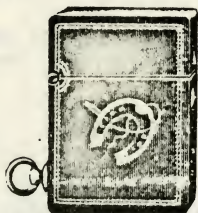
Any number of persons can take part in the game. Each player chooses his horse by the colour and number of its jockey. The Umpire starts the machine and after some time stops the turntable by means of the brake. The player whose jockey stops nearest the flag is the winner.

**2/6**  
**Retail.**

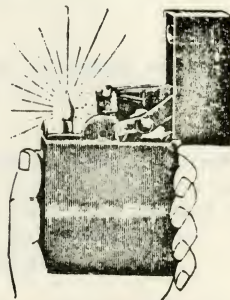
## CIGAR LIGHTERS.



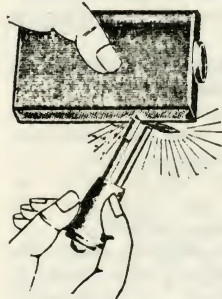
Rex. No. 1 — Black Enamel Case with Gold Engraving. 2/6.



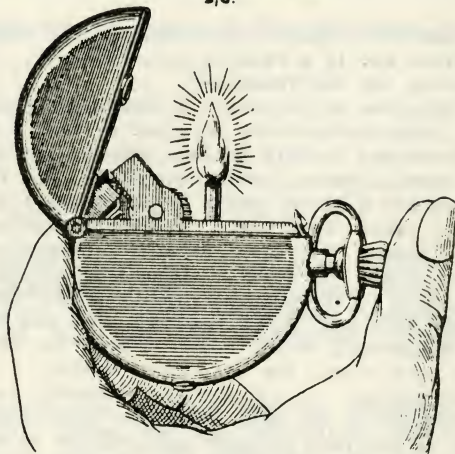
Rex No. 4 — Gilt Metal Case. 2/6.



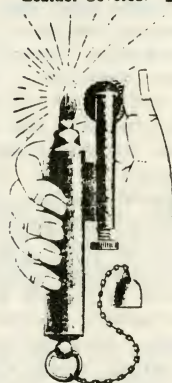
Rex. No. 50.—Metal Case, Leather Covered. 2/-



No. 408 — Friction Lighter. 1/-



Cigar Lighter in form and in size of a watch. Metal Case, Nickel Plated. Chronos. 2/6.



No. 410 — Rectary Lighter. 1/-

Liberal Discounts to the Trade.

## The New Polyphon Supply Co., Limited,

1, 2 & 3, NEWMAN STREET, LONDON, W.  
GLASGOW—27, Jamaica Street. PARIS—33, Rue de Chabrol.

April 1912



## LONDON MEETING

25th FEBRUARY 1986

### THE INTRODUCTION OF THE TEN-INCH GRAMOPHONE RECORD

At the turn of the century, when Eldridge R. Johnson was working to perfect his new process of wax recording, he was also experimenting to find a record which would allow better and louder recording than the 7-inch diameter Berliner disc. Tonight's programme dwelt on the outcome of these experiments, the 10-inch disc, and its development and introduction into the British and European markets. Prepared jointly by EMI Archivist Ruth Edge and ex-EMI Archivist Leonard Petts, it ranks among the most interesting and well-presented meetings I have attended at the Bloomsbury Institute. During the course of the evening we listened to fourteen of the original 10-inch records which were produced during 1901, including one of the almost legendary 10-inch Berliners. In selecting these fourteen the compilers had delved into the EMI 1901 archive and played through several hundred records before making their final choice.

Many weeks' work must have been devoted to the programme's preparation, and it is exasperating that Miss Edge should have been struck down with influenza precisely in time to prevent her from sharing in its presentation. Mr. Petts was patently on the brink of succumbing to the same virus, and he earned the gratitude of the large audience when he undertook to present the entire programme single-handed except for the assistance of Timothy Massey, who operated the turntable, coping manfully with the wildly differing record speeds.

Simple-minded people like me would suppose that to make a 10-inch record one merely needs to make a 7-inch record only three inches bigger. We learned that when one is doing it for the first time there is more to it than that, and besides, the large disc presents the necessity to develop a larger gramophone to play it on. Again, finding paper labels in the centre of gramophone records seems as natural to us today as finding pips in the middle of apples: it was stimulating to be reminded that in the beginning somebody (in this case Eldridge Johnson) had to (a) see the need for something better than the stamping of minimal data into the body of the record; (b) try out various alternatives; and (c) having settled on the concept of a stuck-on paper label, solve the technical problems which that entailed. All this came vividly alive for us as Mr. Petts read from letters which had winged their way across the world between Johnson in Camden, New Jersey, Barry Owen in London, Joseph Berliner in Hanover, and Theodore Birnbaum, director of the Gramophone Company's Berlin sales office. Listening, one could not avoid becoming caught up in the excitement of each new technical problem and each breakthrough.

Upon the arrival in London of the first 10-inch recording machine from Camden, Barry Owen sent Fred Gaisberg without delay, and indeed, it seems, without consultation, to take it to Russia and afterwards to Italy, to record a remarkable number of those countries' finest singers. When a second machine came, Sinkler Derby was packed off to Berlin, Brussels, Vienna, St. Petersburg, Warsaw, Moscow, and Tiflis. All of this in the second half of 1901, and meanwhile, of course, recording went on in the London studios in Maiden Lane. From the many hundreds of records which sprang from this prolific few months, those listed below were played to us, accompanied by interesting and amusing anecdotes concerning the circumstances of their recording.

At the beginning of the evening each member of the audience had been presented with beautifully reproduced facsimiles, much to be treasured, of the first two catalogues put out by the Gramophone & Typewriter Ltd. listing the new 10" Gramophone Concert Records, and of the advertisements published by Messrs. Hawthorne & Sheble of New York upon the launching of the 10-inch discs, somewhat earlier, in the United States. These gifts came to us through the courtesy (and the industry!) of Ruth Edge and her colleague in the EMI Archives Department, our Society Secretary, Suzanne Lewis.

## RECORDS PLAYED

### 10" Black Label G & T records

The Municipal Military Band: Liberty Bell March (Sousa)  
GC-211 (matrix 1277G) Recorded in London December 1901

The Municipal Military Band: Whistling Rufus (Kerry Mills)  
GC-212 (matrix 1280G) Recorded in London December 1901

E. Francisco, baritone: Largo al factotum, "Barber of Seville" (Rossini)  
GC-52687 (from Victor metal 3056) Recorded in USA, late 1900

J. Jacobs, violin: Salut d'amour (Elgar)  
GC-7941 (matrix 113G) Recorded in London April 1901

Leonid Sobinoff, tenor La donna e mobile, "Rigoletto" (Verdi)  
GC-22495 (matrix 266G) Recorded in Moscow, June 1901

Joachim Tartakov, baritone The Asra (Rubinstein)  
GC-22503 (matrix 245xnB) Recorded in Moscow, June 1901

Casini, Colombati, Cesarani, and Corradetti Sextet, "Lucia di Lammermoor"  
(Donizetti)  
GC-54006X (matrix 442G) Recorded in Milan, August 1901

Paul Aumonier, bass Les deux Grenadiers (Schumann)  
GC-32096 (matrix 605G) Recorded in Paris, September 1901

Phylla Siegmann-Wolff, soprano Aria from "Bettelstudent" (Millocker)  
GC-43208 (matrix 170X) Recorded in Berlin, c. September 1901



William Paull, baritone                      The Devout Lover (Maud Valerie White)  
GC 2-2521 (matrix 1167G)                  Recorded in London, November 1901

Ben Davies, tenor I'll sing thee songs of Araby (Clay)  
GC 2-2501 (matrix 1120G) Recorded in London, November 1901

Landon Ronald, piano                      Music from "L'Enfant Prodigue" (Wormser)  
GC-5550 (matrix G 1088R)                Recorded in London c.October 1901

Dan Leno, comedian	The Tower of London
GC-2435 (matrix 1129G)	Recorded in London, November 1901

10" Berliner record

R.M. Raisova, soprano, and N.G. Seversky, baritone      Duet from "La Mascotte"  
  (Audran)  
GC-24040 (matrix 231G)          Recorded in St. Petersburg, June 1901

25th MARCH 1986

Chris Hamilton very sportingly made the journey all the way from Cupar in Scotland to the Bloomsbury Institute in London to talk to us about Scottish record companies. He opened the eyes of one or two of us who, if we thought about Scottish records at all, thought of Beltona, which turns out not to be Scottish anyway. He spent the evening hurling great quantities of fascinating Caledonian labels at us with great enthusiasm and infectious humour. The rate of delivery was quite overwhelming since, while Chris was playing one record on the turntable he would simultaneously be showing us ten others on the slide projector, and passing around yet more from hand to hand among the audience. (I'd think twice before doing that with my own records!) Who would have thought that Scotland could have produced so many different record labels, many of which seem to be unknown south of the Tweed. Gaelfone, Scottish Clan, Girmac of Glasgow and (my favourite) Great Scot Records, which were pressed, Chris assured us, in the dungeons of Perthshire Castle. The evening lengthened but there was no abatement in the profusion of Scottish labels, until one sympathised with a well-known King of that fine country who, on one occasion, said "What, will the line stretch out to the crack of doom?"

I gather that, try as he might, Chris was unable to exhaust his cornucopia of material, and I hope he might be willing to come to London again one day to finish us off. Judging from the reception given to him he will be most welcome. If he does, I must remember to ask him whether my solitary example of the label "Bell Accordion Records", which bears a tartan, and has Scottish music on the record, is really Scottish or another Beltona.

# HINES - not 57 Varieties

THE SCOTTISH GRAMOPHONE MANUFACTURING COMPANY LTD.

by Chris Hamilton

For many years I have tried to find out whether any talking machines were manufactured in Scotland. After many false trails and blind alleys I have been able to discover one such manufacturer. This was the Scottish Gramophone Manufacturing Company Ltd., of Glasgow. I would like to give a brief account of what I have been able to discover about this company and its activities.

In 1915 a certain James Hines, of 18 Derby Crescent, Kelvinside, Glasgow, registered the following patents:

5614 of 14/4/15, 11647 of 12/8/15 and 15958 of 12/11/15. Two further patents followed: 110525 of 7/7/17 and 204631 of 26/1/23.

These patents were all concerned with the manufacture of talking machines. Brief descriptions are as follows:

5614 and 109773 described an expansion chamber which when placed between the back of the soundbox and the mouth of the horn acted as a tone-control.

11647 described an improved starting and stopping device for talking machines. In effect this was an automatic brake which was set manually for each record.

15958 described a butterfly valve arrangement in the neck of the horn which when activated by a lever altered the volume.

204631 described improvements in cabinet design for sound reproducing machines, a device to reflect the sound produced by a talking machine to all parts of a room. This was supposed to be perceived by the audience as indirect sound.

Sometime around 1917 James Hines formed the Scottish Gramophone Manufacturing Co. to manufacture and market gramophones incorporating the ideas described in his patents. However it became obvious that more capital was required to do this and James Hines approached Findley Caldwell Ker C.A., a partner in Messrs. Hardie Caldwell Ker and Hardie, Chartered Accountants, for help. On the 12th of April 1919 the Scottish Gramophone Manufacturing Co. Ltd. was incorporated to acquire and take over as a going concern the Scottish Gramophone Manufacturing Co. of 108, John Street, Glasgow. The Registered Office of the new company was 149 St. Vincent St. Glasgow. This was the office of Messrs. Hardie Caldwell Ker & Hardie.

## THE GRAMOPHONES

As far as I can discover at least two types of gramophone were manufactured. Both carried the trade-mark 'Hines'. One was a table grand, the other an upright cabinet.

The table Hines was very similar in outward appearance and dimensions to the HMV table grand Model 9. Inside the machine, the needle compartments looked like those of the HMV, the soundbox was obviously a copy of the Exhibition and the tapered tone-arm with goose neck is similarly identical. As can be seen in the photographs, there are two quadrant levers, one on the left of the tone-arm and one on the right.



The left one is the tone control, connected by a lever under the motor board to a piston which varies the size of an expansion chamber in the neck of the horn. The quadrant is divided into three parts, one marked for songs and talking, one for orchestras and solo instruments and the third for brass bands. The smallest size of expansion chamber is for the orchestras and solo instruments, while the largest is for the brass bands. The right hand quadrant is linked by a lever to a butterfly valve in the throat of the horn. This controls the volume emitted by the gramophone with the loudest volume when the valve is fully open and the quietest when it is fully closed. On the right towards the front of the motor board is a light which works off a dry-cell battery held in place by clips under the motor board. This would have enabled the user to place records on the turntable and set the controls in dimly-lit conditions. The motor was either a double-spring Garrard or a double spring Swiss.

Later models of the table type had a modified tone-arm which was untapered, and had a swan-neck. This arm rotated on its axis to lift the soundbox clear of the turntable. The sound box was also different, of a newer design and with a larger diaphragm, still of mica.

There was at least one upright cabinet model. This had a conventional type of case with decorated corners, record storage and legs with castors. The top of the cabinet looked identical to that of the table grand. The internal arrangements were also similar to the table model except that there were no quadrant controls. The tone arm and soundbox were of the later design. This model did not have a tone control. The volume control was a rotary type sunk into a recess in the right-hand side of the cabinet level with the butterfly valve pivot. Like that of the table model, the control was linked by a lever linked to the butterfly valve in the throat of the horn.

In all the models I have seen the horn is made of cast iron. This makes them very heavy and not easily moved about. Although I live in Scotland, I find the Hines gramophones relatively uncommon. As I have not come across any catalogues or advertisements, I have no idea how the machines were priced compared with their competitors.

I hope this article will unearth some more information about what I believe to be Scotland's only talking machine manufacturer. I hope some readers can help to fill in the many gaps in the history of the Scottish Gramophone Manufacturing Co. Ltd. I would also be grateful if any reader could come up with any information regarding any other talking machine manufacturer in Scotland.

#### THE COMPANY

At the time of its incorporation in April 1919, the Scottish Gramophone Manufacturing Co. Ltd's share capital was £10,000, consisting of:

1500 "A"  $7\frac{1}{2}\%$  Preference shares of £1 each  
200 "B"  $7\frac{1}{2}\%$  Preference Shares of £1 each  
8300 Ordinary Shares of £1 each

The initial directors were James Hines, Engineer, 108 John St., Glasgow, Managing Director; Findley Caldwell Ker, C.A., Glasgow, Chairman.

The articles of association of the Company stated that the Company had acquired the Letters Patent of James Hines as well as the Scottish Gramophone Manufacturing Company. The Company had the sole right to these patents. James Hines was to receive £4200 for these assets: £2500 for the Letters Patent and £1700 for the moveable plant, machinery, loose tools and stock in trade. This consideration was met in full by the issue of 200 "B" Preference Shares and 2500 Ordinary Shares in the new Company to James

Hines.

The qualification of a director was the holding of 250 ordinary/preference shares in the Company. The Board of Directors was to consist of no fewer than two persons nor more than three.

James Hines was to receive a salary of £300 per annum, to be paid in twelve monthly instalments of £25, for his services to the Company, which were to be full time. The Company's borrowing was not to exceed £5800 without the passing of a resolution to increase borrowing at an extraordinary general meeting of the Company convened for that purpose.

The share account of the Company dated 17/6/19 revealed the appointment of one more director and the existence of two more share-holders. The account was as follows:

<u>Shareholder</u>	<u>"A" Pref</u>	<u>"B" Pref</u>	<u>Ordinary</u>
James Hines		200	1499
Findley Caldwell Ker	1499		
Frank Galbraith, Managing Director, 10 Renfield St. Glasgow			250
William Alexander, merchant, Banknock House, Banknock, Stirlingshire			250

The share account on 16/9/19 had changed as follows: William Clarkson, clerk, 149 St. Vincent St. Glasgow owned one "A" Preference Share. The Registered Office of the company had changed to 204 St. Vincent St. Glasgow, whither, I believe, the offices of Messrs. Hardie Cladwell & Ker had moved.

On 5/2/20 Findley Caldwell had sold 500 of his "A" Preference Shares to a William Symington Davie, coal mine owner, of Heathside, Newton Mearns, Renfrewshire. On 20/11/20 Robert Barr, ship owner, of Dunard, Kilmacoll, Renfrewshire subscribed to 2000 Ordinary Shares. By 29/7/21 Frank Galbraith had died and his shares passed to his widow.

The share account on 27/9/22 had altered to the following:

<u>Shareholder</u>	<u>"A" Pref</u>	<u>"B" Pref</u>	<u>Ordinary</u>
James Hines		200	2500
Findley Caldwell Ker	250		
Mrs Galbraith			250
William Alexander			250
William Clarkson	1		
William S. Davie	500		
Robert Barr			2000
Thomas Lillie ) William Oswald ) Robert Pate )	all of the Royal Bank of Scotland, Glasgow		
	749		

The Share Account on 21/11/23 was as on 27/9/22 except that the 749 "A" Preference Shares in the names of Messrs. Lillie, Oswald and Pate had been transferred to the Royal Bank of Scotland Nominees Ltd., of 39 Royal Exchange Square, Glasgow.

The Share Account remained the same on 28/10/25, 15/11/26 and 14/1/28. However James Hines had died in early 1928 and the share account on 31/13/28 showed that his executors Lawrence Hines and Edwin Hines owned his shares.

The Share Account was the same on 21/12/29 except that William Clarkson was now a Director. The next



share account on 31/12/30 showed that Findley Caldwell Ker had acquired James Hines' shares from his executors. There was no other change until the last share account was published on 7/1/42.

The Company was dissolved on 15/2/43. As there was no money left in the company after paying all its creditors and expenses it had applied to the Registrar of Companies to be struck off the Register.

I have not been able to find any published accounts of the company, and so have been unable to find how profitable it had been. However I assume that the Scottish Gramophone Manufacturing Co., Ltd. had some financial difficulties when the Royal Bank of Scotland took a share in its equity. The company had presumably recovered in 1924 when Findley Caldwell Ker had acquired his 749 "A" Preference shares back.

After James Hines had died, William Clarkson was made a director. However he did not have the requisite number of shares to qualify. This along with the fact that little or no activity in the share account took place afterwards leads me to think that the company ceased active trading within a year or so of the death of James Hines.

\*\*\*\*\*

The S.G.M.C. were not the only makers of a Caledonian Exhibition soundbox look-alike: there was the 'Linwood' reproducer, produced by Dent & Co & Johnson, Ltd., of Linwood, Nr. Paisley (long before Hillman Imps were thought of). Did this company, presumably an amalgamation of two firms, also produce complete gramophones?

An interesting feature of the Hines table grand (just visible in the foreground of the lower of the two photographs) is the double bend in the horn. This is very advanced for 1919; HMV did not get round to that sort of thing until 1925. - Ed.

## WEST ORANGE CENTENARY

I have just received a brochure on the activities that will take place at West Orange in 1986-7 to mark the Centenary of the building of the Edison Laboratory there. It is called "100 Years of Industrial Research". Building was started in 1886 and it was opened on Thanksgiving Day (Nov. 24th) 1887. From June 1986 to Thanksgiving Day (Nov. 26th) 1987 the Centennial of the Laboratory will be observed.

The first event, "High Tea" on the lawn at Thomas Edison's nearby residence, Glenmont, is due to be attended by the Victorian Society in turn-of-the-century clothes. This will be followed through the year by Exhibitions, Symposia, and what are termed Ongoing Events, and all are supported by national and local bodies. Any Member visiting the eastern United States or finding time to spare in New York should contact the Edison National Historic Site, Main Street and Lakeside Avenue, West Orange, New Jersey 07052 (Tel: (201) 736-0550).

George Frow

## MILFORD FARGO

### A Remembrance of a Friend

*by Steven I. Ramm*

The world of record collecting lost a true friend when Milford Fargo died on May 8 1986. I mean the "world" in its truest sense, since Milford's devotion to collecting touched many people around the globe. In addition to being a member of CLPGS, Milford belonged to societies in America and wrote for many collector publications.

Milford was known to the world outside as a Professor of Music Education at the famed Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. He was a composer of more than fifty published compositions and numerous recordings. One unusual composition was a tribute written for the city of Charlotte, South Carolina, "A Sonic Tribute to Charlotte", wherein Milford stood at a street intersection and co-ordinated a railway locomotive, a bagpipe band, a high school band, several groups of school children, a police helicopter, a fire engine with siren blaring and .... a soprano singing from a fourth floor window!

But to record collectors of the world he was known affectionately as "Mr. Ada Jones" (one wonders how his devoted wife Lois felt about this), because of his dedication to accumulating and learning all he could about the "first lady of the phonograph". Milford combed the world, through travelling and correspondence, finding every "take" of every record she made. Because she recorded on some obscure and rare labels, Milford had to search even harder. His collection was maintained in pristine condition and in a very usable format.

I'm proud to say that Milford was my friend. He was the most unselfish and caring person I've ever known. I had the opportunity to visit Rochester two years ago and Milford and Lois opened their house to me. Milford was also brave. He had suffered a previous heart condition and underwent bypass surgery at least twice. But this wouldn't stop him from his quest for collecting or his love for people.

I first met Milford in 1973 at one of the memorable Edison Site Programmes at West Orange, N.J. Milford presided over many of these annual programmes (unfortunately no longer held). He would seek out Pioneer Recording Artists still living and bring them to these gatherings. Some of these artists included Gladys Rice, Douglas Stanbury, Edna White, Roy Smeck and "Wee Willie" Robyn, with whom Milford has given "road show" presentations over the last three years. Milford visited many of these people, especially Ms. Rice and Mr. Stanbury, in the hospital during their final years. Nothing would stop Milford.

To show the people of Rochester that he had a popular side, he broadcast a weekly show over the Public Radio network. The Sunday afternoon programme of old records was officially called "Seems Like Old Times", but Milford referred to it as "Seems Like Old Milford". I watched him prepare for one of these shows. He spent 8 to 10 hours in preparing one half-hour programme. He was meticulous in the care he gave everything he did.

In 1984 Milford prepared a vocal recital with two fellow Eastman School artists, composed only of duets made famous by Ada Jones. Later these songs were re-recorded and released on both l.p. and cassette.



Many collectors who knew Milford did not know of his many recordings. All except the l.p. and cassette from 1985 are out of print. I feel it only fitting that collector Milford should be remembered by a published discography. The listing below is complete to the best of my knowledge and corrections and additions are welcome. Through this listing one can see the diversity of Milford's musical output.

Milford will be missed by his wife Lois, children Lynne and Todd, and his many friends. I, too, will miss him greatly. His inspiration as an unselfish person and his sense of responsibility to future collectors, will be hard to surpass.

#### An (incomplete) Discography of Milford Fargo

*Songs of Genesee Country* - Kendall LP404 (10" l.p.) with accompanying book of music, 1960. All songs composed by Milford for the TV series "Genesee Country" on WHEC-TV Rochester, N.Y. All songs are sung by Milford with autoharp accompaniment.

*Zacchaeus* - Private pressing - Reel Sound RS-142 (12"). Recorded on May 17 1981 at Third Presbyterian Church, Rochester N.Y. Words by Charles Leport. Music by Milford Fargo. Various artists (Milford plays piano in trio). Based on Luke 19, where Zacchaeus was chief tax collector. In this modern day re-telling, he is an employee of the Internal Revenue Service.

*The Truth About Windmills* - Pantheon PFN 1971 (12"). 1985. Opera in one act by Alec Wilder. Eastman Chamber Ensemble. Various soloists. Milford was a close friend of Alec Wilder and wrote the liner notes for this l.p.

*A Child's Plea for Peace* - Turnabout l.p. - c. 1969. Milford Fargo conducting Eastman Orchestra and children's chorus.

*A Family Christ Mass* - 2-12" l.p. set (c. 1978) Private pressing. Composed and conducted by Milford Fargo.

*Cuddle Up a Little Closer - Conversational Duets* - Pantheon PFN 2221 (l.p.). Also, Price-less XY2272 (cassette). 1985, with Milford Fargo and Nancie Kennedy, vocalists; Robert Freeman, piano. Re-recordings of duets originally recorded by Ada Jones and various partners, including Billy Murray and Len Spencer. Liner notes also by Milford.

Comments and corrections to: Steven Ramm, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

HELP!

Dear Sir,

I have a record, Brunswick B 1456. On one side the song "Young and Healthy" is performed by Guy Lombardo and his Royal Canadians with Bing Crosby. On the other side Wayne King and his Orchestra play "The Japanese Sandman". The label is the usual Brunswick design, except that printed within it are the words "News Chronicle Competition Record". I reject the thought that the News Chronicle ran a competition for up- and coming performers, and that this was won by Bing Crosby, Guy Lombardo and his Royal Canadians, and Wayne King and his Orchestra. Can anybody enlighten me?

Yours sincerely, Ted Cunningham

# THE GRAMOPHONE STORES

Have received so many letters from the country, it is thought best to have a special photograph taken of six of our Special Machines. Underneath are shown six models :



No. 1. **Horn Machine**, size  $12\frac{1}{2}$ " x  $12\frac{1}{2}$ " x 7". Oak box, light or dark. Motor with 10" Plate, playing 12" Records. Horn, Flower-shaped, size 18" across ... Price **£2 17 6**

No. 2. **Horn Machine**, size  $14\frac{1}{2}$ " x  $14\frac{1}{2}$ " x 7" Light Oak Cabinet. Large coloured Horn, either green or red (outlined gold). Plays longest 12" Record ... Price **£4 4 0**

Or with a more powerful Motor ... .. Price **£4 15 0**

No. 3. **Horn Machine**, either Red, Green or Blue ; outlined in gold ; size of base 14" x 14" x 7" Mahogany Cabinet. Swiss Motor, with Dial Regulator Price **£4 7 6**

No. 4. **Moisellophone Portable**. A thoroughly reliable Portable. Size  $6\frac{1}{2}$ " x  $13\frac{1}{2}$ " x 12". Plays 12" Records, and carries Records in lid. Garrard Motor. Also has lock and key ... .. Price **£3 3 0**

No. 5. **Table Grand**. Oak Cabinet, strongly constructed and polished to a fine finish. Full floating horn fitted with heavy case metal Resonator, giving sonorous reproduction. Powerful high-grade Garrard Single-spring Motor with helical-cut gears. Dial Speed Regulator and latest type brake. 10" Push-covered Turntable. Tapering Goose Neck Tone-arm, solid brass, heavy nickel plated. The famous Moisellophone Soundbox adapted for Steel and Fibre Needles. Height 12". Width  $16\frac{1}{2}$ ". Depth 19". Price **£5 5 0**

No. 6. **Table Machine**, fitted with ball-bearing Tone-arm and Swiss Thorens Motor. We have sold hundreds of this model, and all our customers are well pleased. Price **£3 10 0**

With any of the above Machines we give Three Records Free.

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**JOHNSTON'S COURT, Grafton Street, DUBLIN.**

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## EDISON'S WINTER HOME

by Mike Field

In 1885, Edison at the age of 38, was seriously ill and his doctor advised him to move to a warmer climate than New Jersey if he was to survive. He chose Fort Myers on the west coast of Florida to set up his "Winter Home" where he not only recovered but was set up to live to the ripe old age of 84.

He chose a property located in McGregor Boulevard, a magnificent avenue lined with stately Royal Palm trees the first two miles of which were planted by Edison. The Winter Home is situated in 14 acres of land much of which is a tropical botanical garden said to be Edison's consuming passion. Plants, shrubs and trees planted there have been brought from all over the world and reflect the search (in part at least) for a substance from which to make rubber. While much of the official visitor's tour concentrates on the garden and house, there is plenty for the technically minded. There is for example, the Chemical laboratory where the principal task was the development of a process to produce rubber from the plant Golden Rod. In the tiny office of the laboratory the visitor is shown Edison's cot on which he took his 15 minute cat naps which it is said enabled him to work long hours. But also in this office is an early Diamond Disc machine mounted in an open wooden frame. Part of the frame is literally chewed away! Edison who was very deaf could not hear well enough to evaluate the performance of the machine or records in the ordinary manner so he clamped his teeth on to the frame and the musical vibration was transmitted from jaw to ear. The chewed out portion of the frame was where he "listened". It is a little curious to find this experimental machine in the office of the Chemical laboratory but no explanation was offered.

To the technically minded, Mecca is represented by the museum. Dedicated by Charles Edison, it was set up to display Edison memorabilia of all sorts ranging from light bulbs to his Model T Ford. Incidentally, Edison thought the car was just right and refused to change it even though Ford wanted to give his friend a new one every year. So every two years or so, Ford mechanics would descend on Fort Myers and up date the car. In so doing they changed the body, engine and wheels over the years 1907 to 1927, but it was still Edison's Model T!

The Museum claims to house one of the finest collections of Edison phonographs "anywhere". This may very well be true. There are about 170 machines on display of which about half are open horn although not all the exhibits are of Edison manufacture in spite of the claim. There is an Edison Bell Imp and a Gem, a Puck and a Multiphone. A "Stereophone" (pictures with sound) incorporates a Pathe cylinder machine and one or two others are a little suspect. A large machine for providing sound for talking pictures uses the magnifying principle attributed to Higham and appears to use a Columbia BC reproducer. However there is nothing suspect about the vast majority and some unusual machines can be seen including a gold plated "M" and several highly desirable nickel in the slot machines.

There is a "Spectacle" model which appears to be much wider than usual and incorporates a stepped drive pulley i.e. two diameters, which implies a two speed system for the belt drive. Close by is "The first Springwound Edison Phonograph sold by the Edison Phonograph Co. of 43 Pine St. San Francisco" The statement is a little ambiguous - is it the first machine or the first sold by that Company?. The top frame which supports the mandrel is similar to an early Home, but in this case the motor is mounted horizontally. That is the spring and gears wheels of the motor are parallel to the top plate instead of being at right angles. A large governor mounted at the left hand end of the top plate is driven by a contrate gear wheel while the winding handle is at the front. Another example is "The 1st model of an electric phonograph of standard manufacture" which appears to be identical to the

Edison "Commercial" machine in an oak case. The "Commercial connection leads to an interesting coincidence. When the artist Francis Barraud was trying to sell his painting of a dog listening to a talking machine, the original machine in the picture was a "Commercial". As we know the Gramophone Company agreed to buy the picture providing Barraud substituted the small disc machine now famous as the "Dog Model"- universally known as the trade mark "His Master's Voice". Not quite as well known is a painting by an Italian artist called Pompeo Massoni depicting an old couple listening with obvious delight to an Edison Standard phonograph. The original of this picture hangs in the museum at Fort Myers and lo and behold the machine painted originally was not a Standard but a "Puck" - a cheap machine made in Germany! The February 1906 issue of the Edison Phonograph Monthly refers to a trade calendar for 1906 incorporating a reproduction of the painting featuring the Standard. The article reports that the original was bought by the National Phonograph Co. for \$1000 and is "now being reproduced in a handsome and life like manner". Perhaps naturally enough, the article makes no mention of the Puck!

Altogether the Museum is a delightful and instructive place (even though the guides are a little too enthusiastic in attributing more than a fair share to Edison's inventiveness) and is well worth a visit by sun seeking holiday makers in Florida.

#### A RECORDING COMPETITION - ON WAX

Both Duncan Miller and myself have been keen wax-cylinder recording buffs for as long as we have owned phonographs, and the thought of having a competition (partly to boost sales of our own blanks) seemed a good, if a little whimsical, idea.

For the first of its kind in many years, it was well subscribed and I heartily thank all those brave people who 'had a go'. Every effort we listened to was entertaining in its own way.

The prize for the most entertaining and artistic selection goes to Mr. L Miles-Mallinson of Barrow-in-Furness, with his entry of "Dot and Cross" Polka, a pretty little cornet duet accompanied by a brass band. It was well announced, well played (with some wonderfully crisp staccato repeated notes and the players were absolutely together at all times) and well recorded. The box was carefully labelled and provided with a title slip for the record.

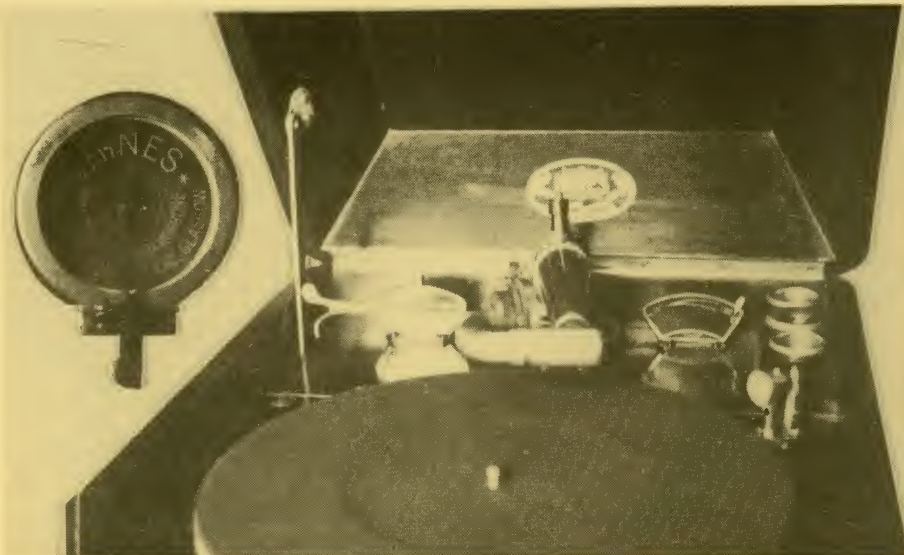
Mr. Kevin Byrne, of Downside School, near Bath, takes the prize for the best technical achievement with his recording of a piano playing "Dill Pickles", a ragtime burlesque. The cut of the record was deep and even and we were impressed by the volume and clarity of this effort. The whole of the register - from bass to moderately high treble was present and the piece played with great dash and point. The piano has always been very difficult to record, and Mr. Byrne has managed to tackle this difficult issue and in so doing, has achieved very pleasant results.

For the future, there will be another recording competition and we plan to announce the winners at the Phonofair of 1987. At this year's Phonofair, we shall play the winning entries of the '85-'86 competition. Once again, a big thank you to all who took part, and in so doing, made the first ever Miller Morris & Co. recording competition a success.





"Carry on, Miss Harrison. I've potted the little blighter who was making all the racket!"



The Hines Gramophone: see article on Page 46

